

IN THE CLAIMS

Claim 1 (Currently Amended):

1. A method for making optical fiber, the method comprising the steps of:
forming a glass core rod by soot deposition, the glass core rod having a core region surrounded by a cladding region;
dehydrating the glass core rod;
consolidating the glass core rod to form an optical fiber preform;
drawing fiber from the optical fiber preform; and
exposing the drawn optical fiber to an atmosphere containing deuterium at room temperature and at a partial pressure between approximately 0.01 and 0.05 atmospheres.

Claim 2 (Previously Presented):

2. The method as recited in claim 1, wherein the exposing step further comprises exposing the drawn optical fiber to a deuterium atmosphere having a partial pressure of approximately 0.01 atmospheres of deuterium at room temperature for approximately 6 days.

Claim 3 (Original):

3. The method as recited in claim 1, wherein the exposing step further comprises exposing the drawn optical fiber to a deuterium atmosphere in such a way that reduces the amount of Si defects in the fiber.

Claim 4 (Previously Presented):

4. The method as recited in claim 1, further comprising the step of forming an overclad region around the glass core rod to form an overclad optical fiber preform, and wherein the drawing step comprises drawing fiber from the overclad optical fiber preform.

Claim 5 (Previously Presented):

5. The method as recited in claim 4, wherein the overclad region forming step comprises the steps of:
depositing soot around the glass core rod;

dehydrating the deposited soot; and
consolidating the deposited soot around the glass core rod.

Claim 6 (Original):

6. The method as recited in claim 5, wherein the soot deposition in the overclad region forming step is selected from the group consisting of vapor axial deposition (VAD) and outside vapor deposition (OVD).

Claim 7 (Previously Presented):

7. The method as recited in claim 4, wherein the overclad region forming step comprises the steps of:

positioning an overclad tube around the glass core rod; and
heating the overclad tube along the length thereof in such a way that the overclad tube collapses onto the glass core rod to form the overclad optical fiber preform.

Claim 8 (Original):

8. The method as recited in claim 1, wherein the soot deposition in the glass core rod forming step is selected from the group consisting of vapor axial deposition (VAD) and outside vapor deposition (OVD).

Claim 9 (canceled)

Claim 10 (Previously Presented)

10. The method as recited in claim 1, wherein the exposing step further comprises exposing the drawn optical fiber to a deuterium atmosphere having a partial pressure of approximately 0.05 atmospheres of deuterium at room temperature for approximately 1.5 days.